

# Response Statement - Eulachon, Fraser River population

**December 8, 2011**

**Common Name:** Eulachon, Fraser River population

**Scientific Name:** *Thaleichthys pacificus*

**Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC):** Endangered

**How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment:** The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will undertake consultations with the government of British Columbia, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Eulachon, Fraser River population, should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Endangered. The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Eulachon, Fraser River population, to the Governor in Council upon completion of consultations.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

**Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC:** This short-lived semelparous species is extremely rich in lipid and spends over 95% of its life in the marine environment. This population's spawning biomass reached a historic low of only 10 t in 2008. The long term average spawning biomass on the Fraser River may have been about 1000 t. Based on the available spawning stock biomass time series, the 10-year decline rate was estimated to be 98%. The single small spawning area constitutes a single location.

**Occurrence:** British Columbia, Pacific Ocean

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency

**Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:**

British Columbia

**Applicable federal legislation:** Fisheries are managed and fish and fish habitat are protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

**Conservation activities underway:** A number of activities have been undertaken for Eulachon, including the closure of the commercial fisheries for Eulachon on the Fraser River and suspending dredging on the Fraser River during Eulachon spawning season (March 15-May 15). Bycatch reduction measures have been implemented in the commercial shrimp trawl fishery including bycatch reduction devices (BRD's) and potential closures when cumulative Eulachon bycatch levels are reached. In addition, recreational fishing in Areas 6-10 and 28-29 has been closed, there is a limited First Nation fisheries on the Fraser River and an annual egg/larval survey (stock monitoring program) on the Fraser River is conducted in conjunction with First Nations.